



FACT SHEET

Sports Dietetics



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HYDRATION

Water is one of the most important nutrients in an elite athlete's nutrition program. Drinking too little water or losing too much through sweating decreases your ability to train hard and recover properly.

Water does more than just keep you hydrated. For elite athletes, water:

- Acts as a transporter to supply working muscles with the nutrients they need during training
- Helps the body get rid of the waste products resulting from high-intensity training
- Helps the body cool itself during exercise by dissipating heat through sweat

Losing even a small amount of fluid during training or starting a workout dehydrated will make it hard to perform at your best. Fluid losses of 2-3% of an elite athlete's body weight (3-4 pounds for a 150 pound athlete) can lead to:

- Lack of concentration and focus
- Early fatigue
- Trouble tolerating hot weather conditions
- A longer recovery time

Are you hydrated?

An easy and effective method to figure out if you're drinking the right amount is to check the color of your urine.

Using the chart below, aim for a urine color throughout the day of #2-3 (pale yellow or the color of lemonade). Anything above a #3 indicates that you're not drinking enough fluid and your performance can suffer.

Remember, certain vitamin/mineral supplements can make your urine appear dark yellow, as will your first bathroom break of the day.

Urine Color Chart



How much should you drink?

The stomach cannot empty more than 16 oz of fluid per hour, so avoid drinking more than this amount.

You should aim to drink an electrolyte-based sports drink regularly during exercise. Sipping is the best method, rather than trying to drink infrequent large volumes.

On the night before a competition, you should have:

- 5-6pm: 16 oz sports drink (sip)
- 6-7pm: 16 oz sports drink (sip)

Then sip occasionally on a sports drink/water on the day of competition, until your race starts.



Contact: Head Dietitian